The Art and Science of Film and Behavior Change

Beth Karlin

Transformational Media Lab

Center for Unconventional Security Affairs
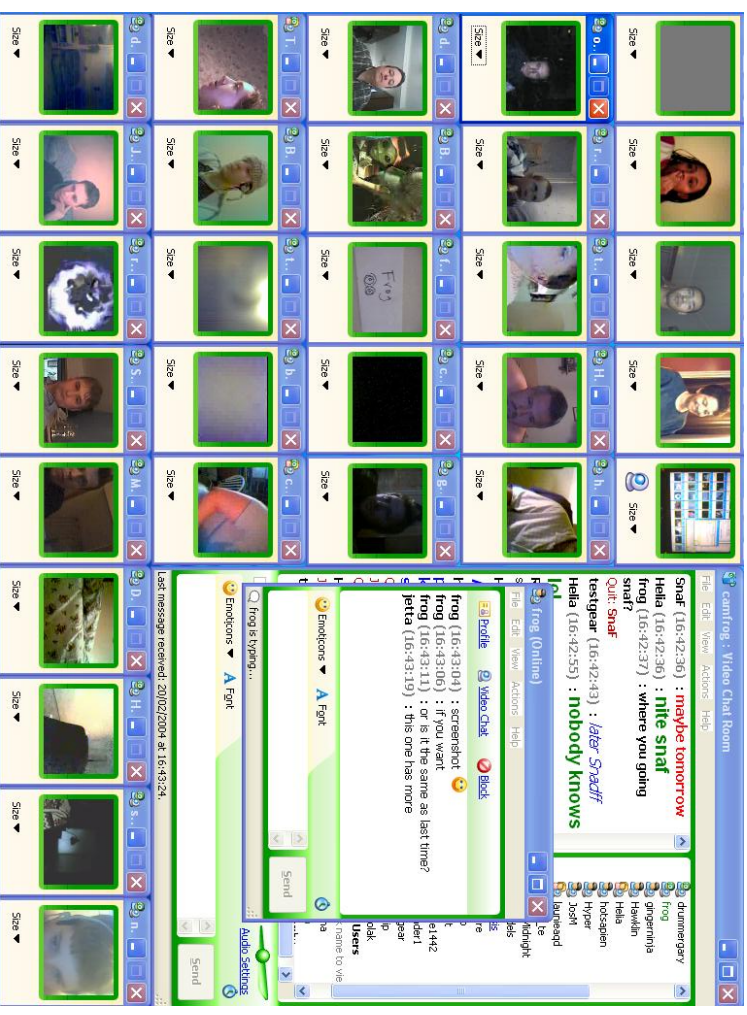
University of California, Irvine

CUSA | Center for Unconventional Security Affairs

Underlying Assumptions

1. **Technology and new media** are changing how people interact with our natural, built, and social worlds.

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2. There are **potential opportunities** to leverage these changes for pro-social / pro-environmental benefit.
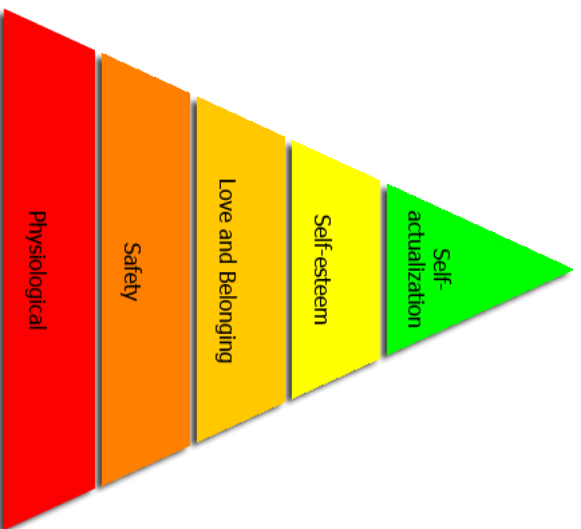
Underlying Assumptions

1. **Technology and new media** are changing how people interact with our natural, built, and social worlds.

2. There are **potential opportunities** to leverage these changes for pro-social / pro-environmental benefit

3. A **social scientific approach** provides a theoretical base and empirical methodology to study this potential.

Self-actualization

Self-esteem

Love and Belonging

Safety

Physiological

Cognition/Memory
Learning
Personality
Development
Perception
Society Health
Physiology
Language

Transformational Media Lab

1. **Technology and new media are changing how people interact with our natural, built, and social worlds.**

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Mission:

Our lab studies how media is (and can be) used to transform individuals, communities, and systems.

Transformational Media Lab

Smart Grid and Energy Efficiency

Film and Social Change

Mission:

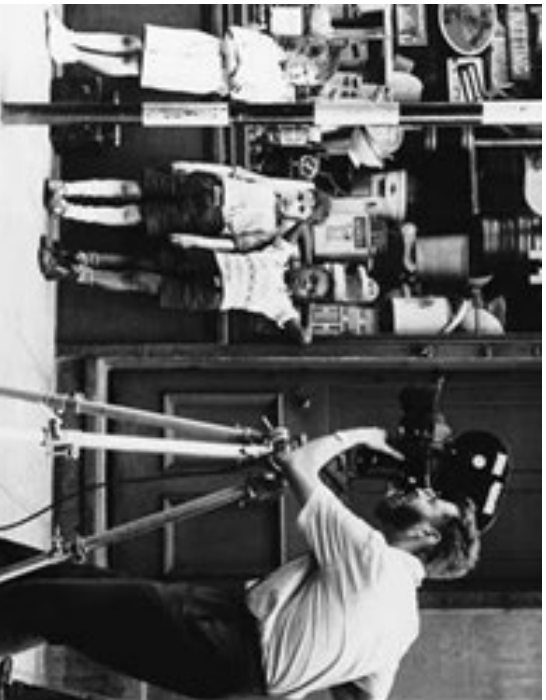Our lab studies how media is (and can be) used to transform individuals, communities, and systems.

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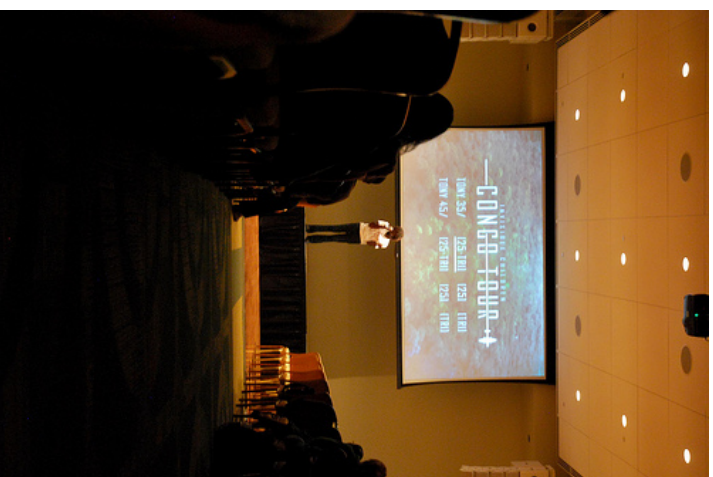# Media and Transformation

- **Descriptive** — media describe transformation
- **Instrumental** — media as tool of transformation
- **Constitutive** — media constitute transformation
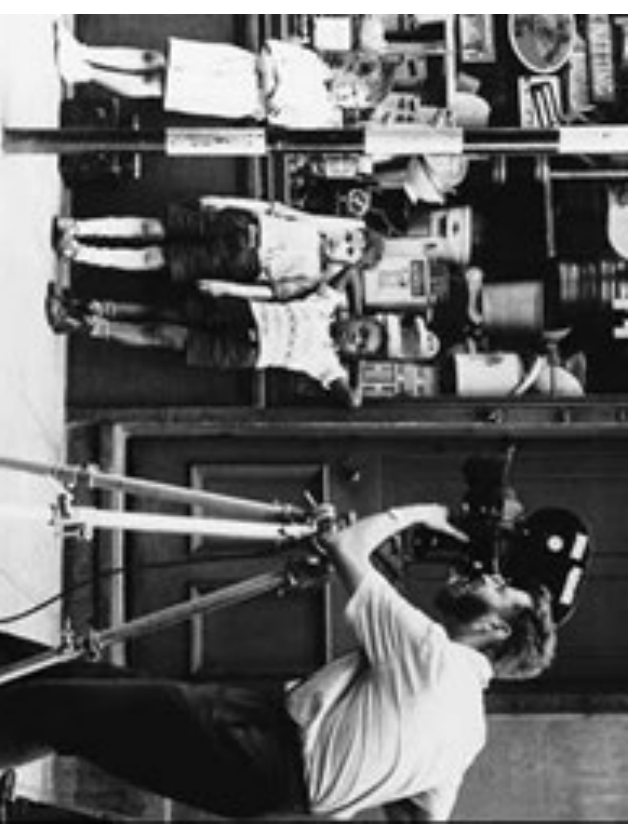

Storytelling

Engagement

Activism

media describe transformation

- **Descriptive**
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Film as Story

The Fledgling Hypothesis

"We often see multiple films on a very similar subject or with a similar social change goal.

Emily Verellen, 2010
The Fledgling Fund

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The Fledgling Hypothesis

"We often see multiple films on a very similar subject or with a similar social change goal.

Food Films
- Food Inc
- Fresh
- Food Fight
- Ingredients
- Food Matters
- Supersize Me
- The Future of Food
- The Garden
- King Corn
- What's on your plate?
- Deconstructing supper

Climate Films
- Everything's Cool
- An Inconvenient Truth
- 11th hour
- No Impact Man
- Collapse
- Radically Simple
- Blind Spot

Water Films
- Flow
- Blue Gold
- Tapped
- Thirst
- Blue Legacy
- Story of Bottled Water
- Last Call at the Oasis

Transportation Films
- Who Killed the Electric Car?
- Revenge of the Electric Car
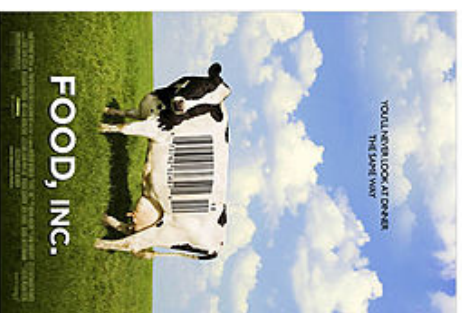- Fuel
- Crude

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The Fledgling Hypothesis

"We often see multiple films on a very similar subject or with a similar social change goal.

Within the range of storytelling, some methods truly speak to an audience by sparking real emotions…and others do little more than entertain or inform."

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Affect to Action Project
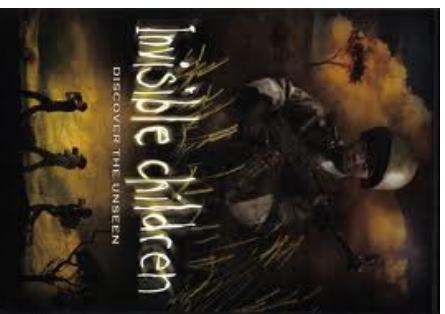
- **Our Goal:** Investigate the use of psychological principles in film to better understand how narrative, framing, and editing strategies can impact response.

- **Our Approach:**
  - Phase 1: Theory Development
  - Phase 2: Content Analysis
  - Phase 3: Testing Impacts

Methodology

1. Read lots of psychology
2. Watch lots of movies
3. Look for patterns
4. Develop coding sheet
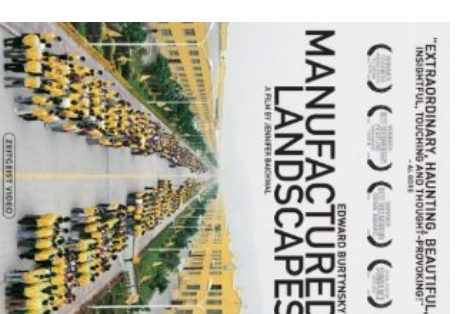
Affect to Action Framework

1. **Establish relevance** to increase level of involvement

2. **Elicit emotion** to create receptivity

3. **Educate wisely** to increase awareness

4. **Evoke morals** to create an imperative

5. **Empower audiences** to engage behavior

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Construal Level Theory

Psychological Distance

- Spatial
- Temporal
- Social
- Hypothetical

Information that is HERE and NOW given to ME with HIGH CERTAINTY reduces distance.

(Trope & Liberman, 2010)

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Establish Relevance

- First-person narrative

- Identifiable victim

- Show impacts on viewer

- Address the viewer directly

- Zooming in and out

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Protection Motivation Theory

Perceive

$\Downarrow$

Appraise
- Threat appraisal
- Coping appraisal

$\Downarrow$
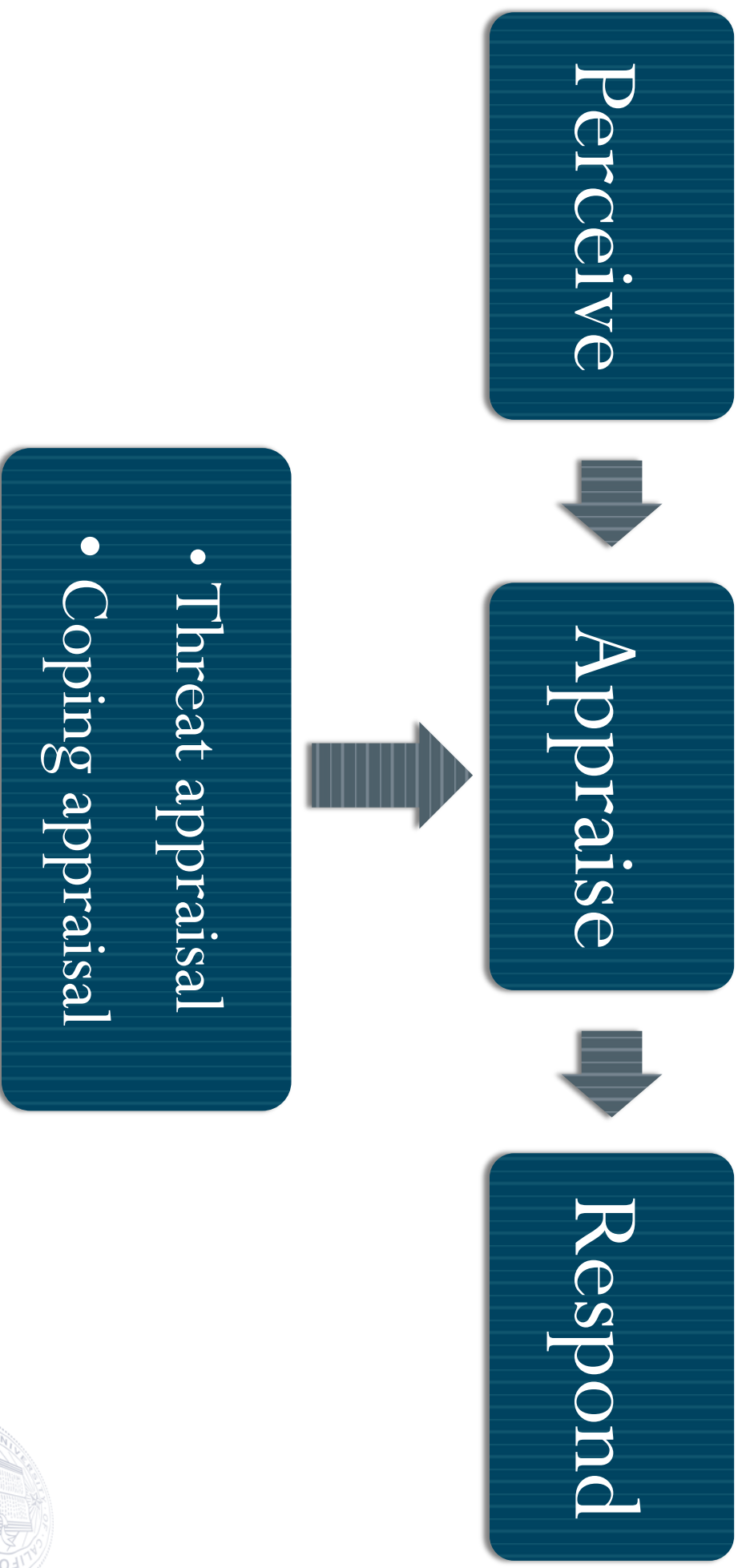
Respond

Protection Motivation Theory

- Threat Appraisal
  - Threat Severity (How bad is it?)
  - Threat Vulnerability (Can it happen to me?)

- Coping Appraisal
  - Behavioral Efficacy (Can I do something?)
  - Response Efficacy (Will it matter?)
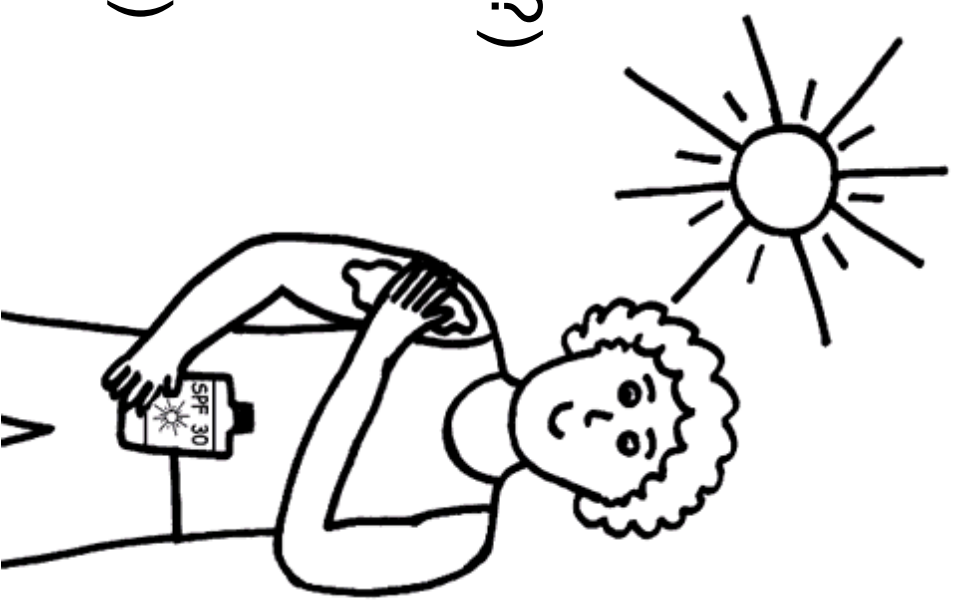
Empower Audience

- What has been done
- What can be done
- What are you doing
- What can the viewer do
- How do they do it
- Can they do it with you?

- Be **specific**
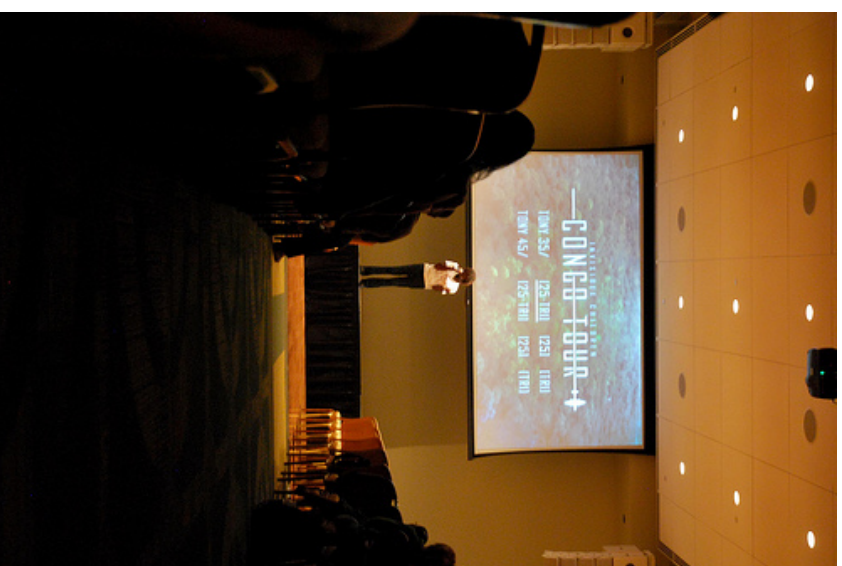- **Connect** action to outcome
- **Ask** people to help

- **Descriptive**
- **Instrumental**
- **Constitutive**

media as tool of transformation

Film as tool

Film as Boundary Object
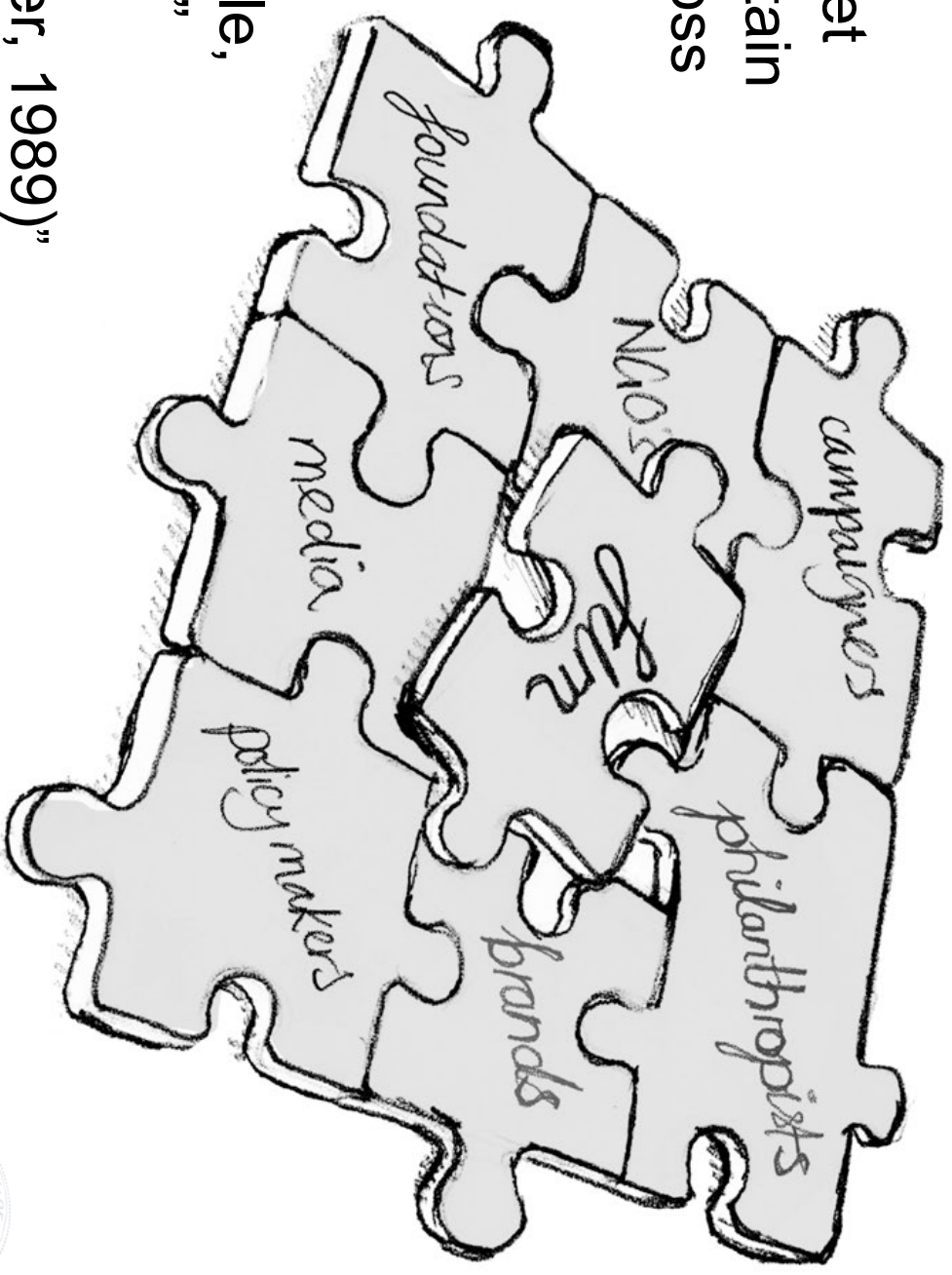
"Boundary objects are…
both plastic enough to
adapt to local needs, yet
robust enough to maintain
a common identity across
sites…They have
different meanings in
different social worlds
but their structure is
common enough to
make them recognizable,
a means of translation."

(Star & Griesemer, 1989)"

foundations

media

NGOs

campaigns

film

policy makers

brands

philanthropists

Film as Boundary Object

"specific **social action campaigns** for each film and documentary designed to give a voice to issues that resonate in the films" (Participant Media, 2010)

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But … if you build it,

Will they come?

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The Black Box Model

Input →

```
BLACK BOX
```

→ Output

A black-box model is a system of which there is no a priori information available.

The Black Box in Film

Program x

→
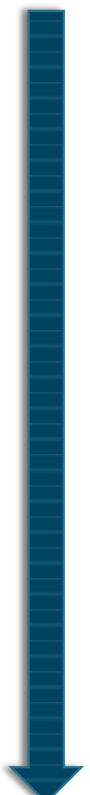
Outcome y

If X, then Y

OR

If film/campaign happens, then outcomes occur.

Questions remain...

Program x

What is the program?

What is going on here?

↓

How do we measure outcomes?

Outcome y

A theoretical approach

Program x

Clearly defined and operationalized

Hypothesis / Theory

Outcome y

Metrics tested for reliability & validity

Developing Case Studies

Invisible Children
DISCOVER THE UNSEEN

FLOW

THE STORY OF STUFF
WWW.STORYOFSTUFF.COM

an inconvenient truth

Imagination.
Old Boxes.
Tape.
Watch Caine's Arcade

FOOD, INC.
YOU'LL NEVER LOOK AT DINNER THE SAME WAY

HOME
A FILM BY YANN ARTHUS-BERTRAND
5 JUIN 2009
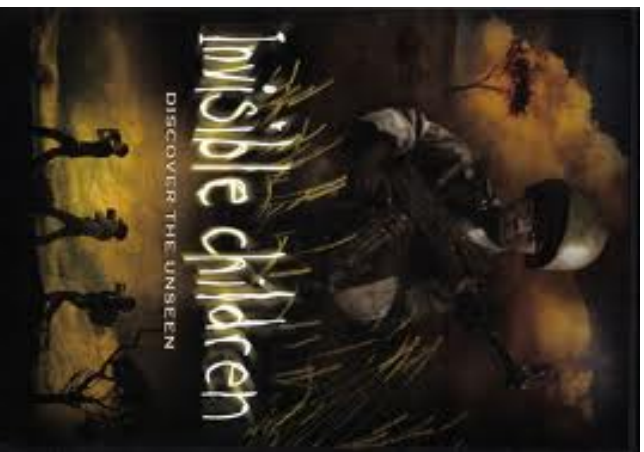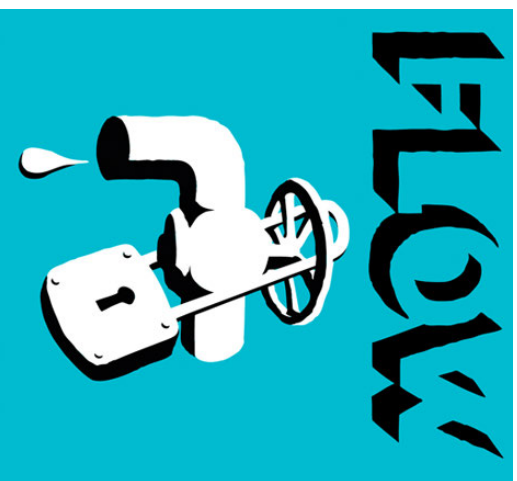
Distribution
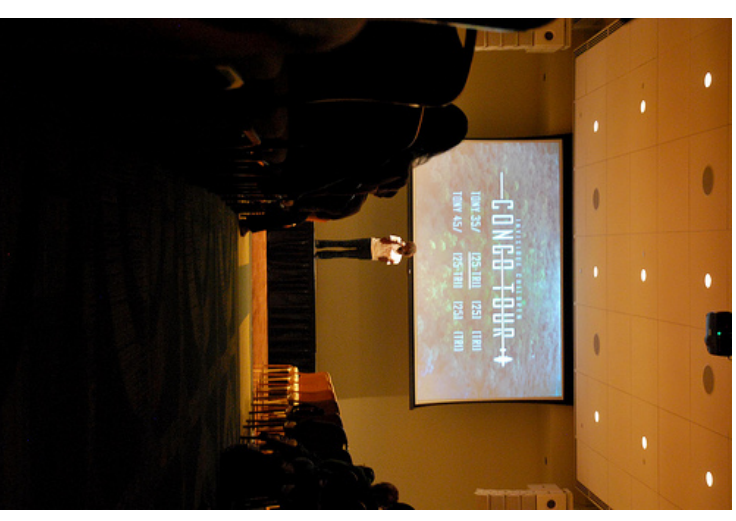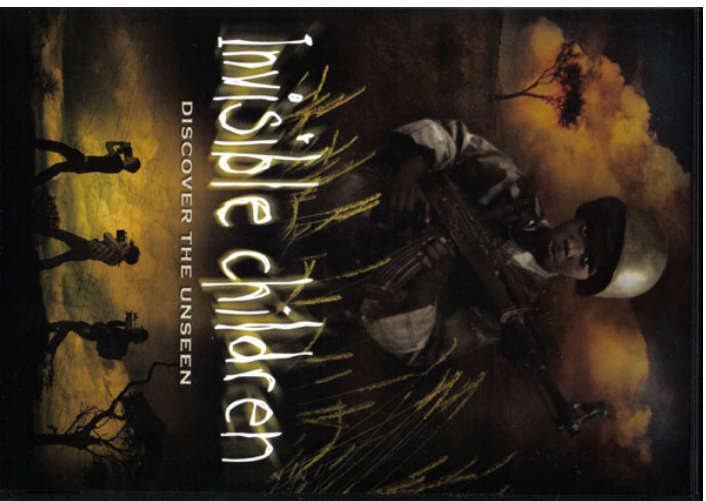
1. Theatrical Release
2. Broadcast
3. Festivals

4. Screenings
5. DVD
6. Digital

Marketing

1. Targeting
2. Branding
3. Advertising
4. Promoting

INVISIBLE CHILDREN

Fall '10 Merch

They're coming:

Be ready!

Made in Uganda Tees: $25

Regular Tees: $20

DVDs, hats & bracelets: $20

MEND cinch or messenger bags: $75 - $85

Technology

1. Web 1.0 (website)
2. Web 2.0 (social media)

Outreach

1. Schools: curriculum, clubs, events
2. Places of worship
3. Community meetings, screenings, etc.
4. Large-scale events

Collaborations

1. Partners (NGOs, companies, etc.)
2. Opinion Leaders (celebrities, experts, etc.)

Lobbying

1. Direct
2. Indirect

SIGN THE PLEDGE TO HELP US BRING KONY TO JUSTICE IN 2012.

JOSEPH KONY IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S WORST WAR CRIMINALS AND I SUPPORT THE INTERNATIONAL EFFORT TO ARREST HIM, DISARM THE LRA AND BRING THE CHILD SOLDIERS HOME.

EMAIL ADDRESS

ZIP/POSTAL CODE

PLEDGE NOW

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- **Descriptive**
- **Instrumental**
- **Constitutive**

media constitute transformation

Film as participatory

New Models of Engagement

Producer · Customer · Participant · Consumer · Prosumer · Community · Citizen

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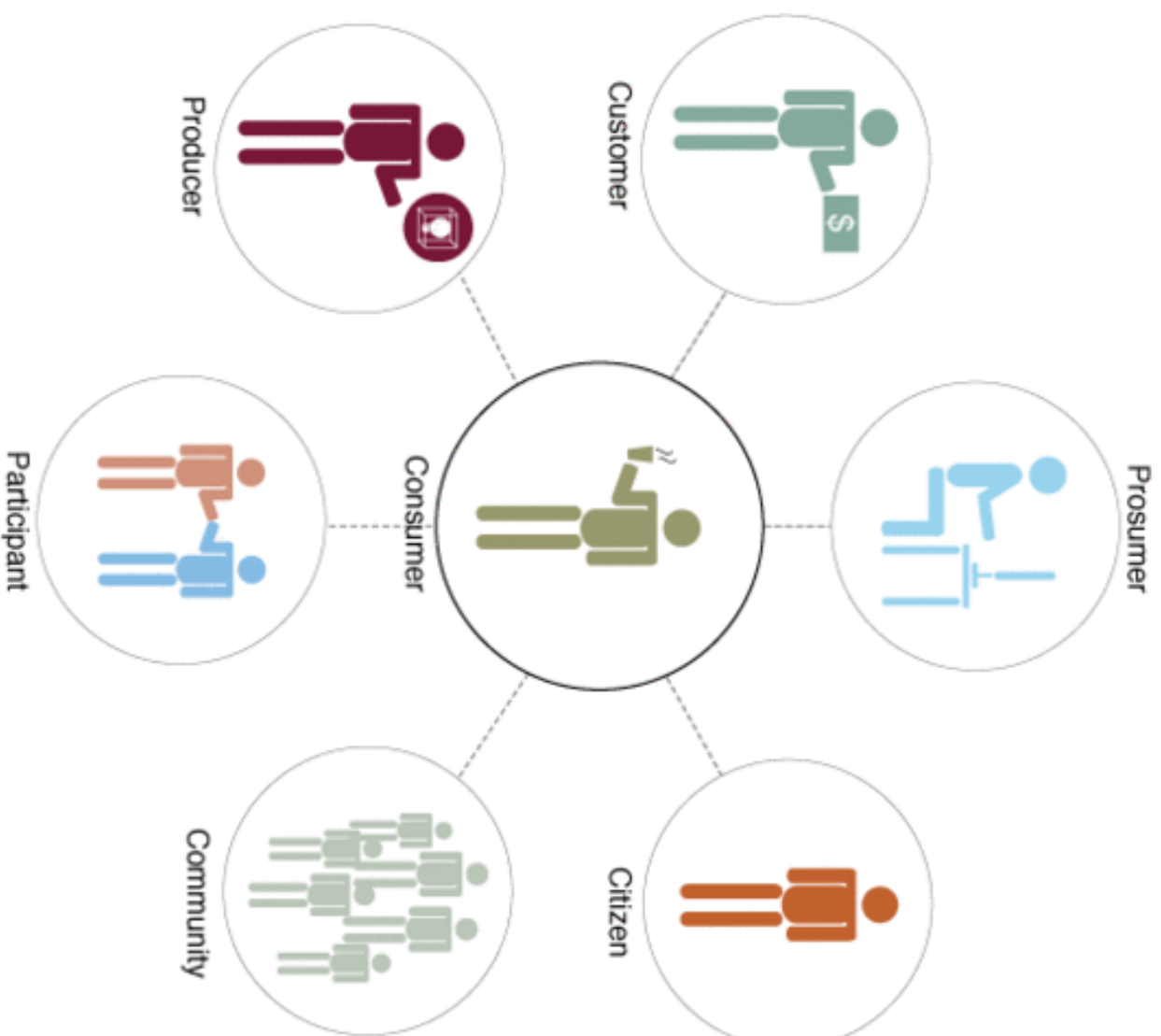
Participatory Cultures

"Not every member must contribute, but all must believe they are free to contribute when ready & that what they contribute will be appropriately valued."

Henry Jenkins

Participatory Cultures

FredCavazza.net

Case Study – Invisible Children

Who gets involved?

Age When Exposed to Invisible Children

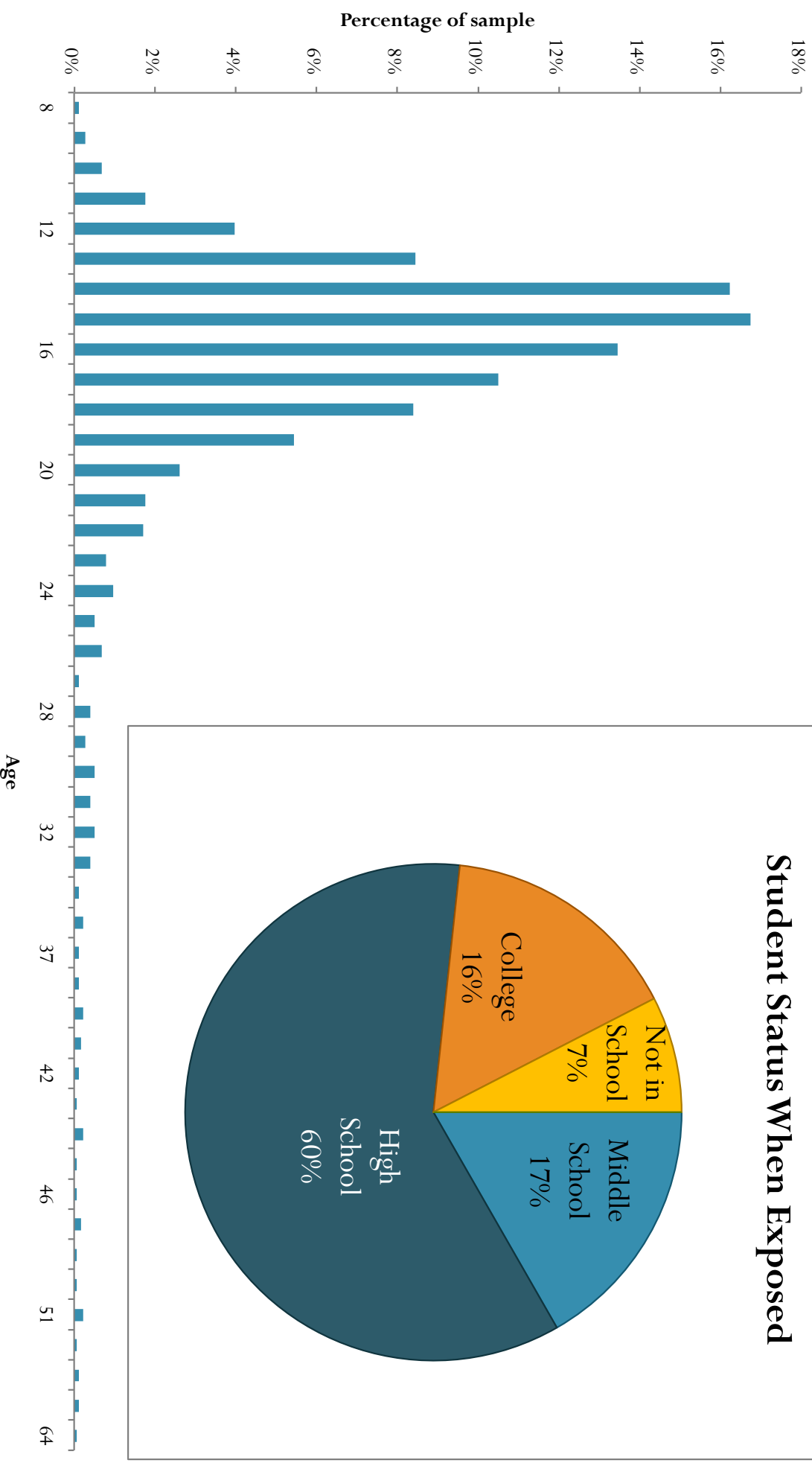Percentage of sample

Age

Student Status When Exposed

College
16%

Not in
School
7%

Middle
School
17%

High
School
60%
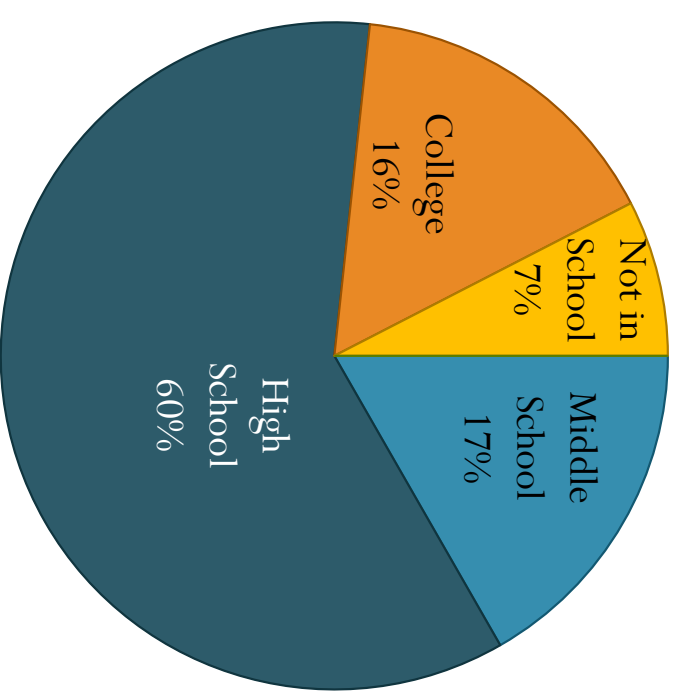
How do they get involved?

Spheres of Influence:

1. Organizational
2. Interpersonal
3. Media

Media 7%
- PRINT
- RADIO/TV
- INTERNET

Organizational 6%
- SCHOOL
- PLACE OF WORSHIP
- NGO
- IC EVENT

Interpersonal 23%
- ACQUAINTENCE
- FRIEND
- FAMILY

SCHOOL/CHURCH SCREENING 2%

IC TOUR 32%

TEACHER/PASTOR 21%

SOCIAL MEDIA
EVENTBOOTH
CELEBRITY
BRANDING
6%

What do they do?

Activity	Percentage
Visited IC on internet/social media	96%
Seen IC Film	93%
Talked to friends/family	91%
Purchased an IC item	79%
Posted on Facebook	78%
Donated to IC	76%
Tweeted	34%
Shared on blog or website	32%
Involved with friends	60%
Fundraised for screening or event	57%
Involved with school	50%
Involved in an IC club or group	42%
Participated in an IC event	37%
Involved with family	21%
Involved with place of worship	9%
Lobbied to Congress	6%
Organized screening or event	30%
Staff/Intern/Roadie	5%

Casual 9%

Social / Participant 44%

Leadership 43%

Formal / Professional 5%

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Impacts on Organization

INVISIBLE CHILDREN
JOSEPH KONY
2012

Days to 100 Million Views

Kony 2012 — 6
Susan Boyle: Britain's Got Talent — 9
Lady Gaga: Bad Romance — 18
Rebecca Black: Friday — 45
Justin Bieber: Baby — 56
Miley Cyrus: Party in the USA — 57
Modern Warfare 2 — 77
Beyonce: Single Ladies — 114
Katy Perry: Hot'n'Cold — 122
Jeff Dunham: Achmed The Dead Terrorist — 165
The Annoying Orange — 167
David After Dentist — 359
Charlie Bit My Finger Again — 402
Evian: Live Young — 416
Laughing Baby — 467

Visible MEASURES
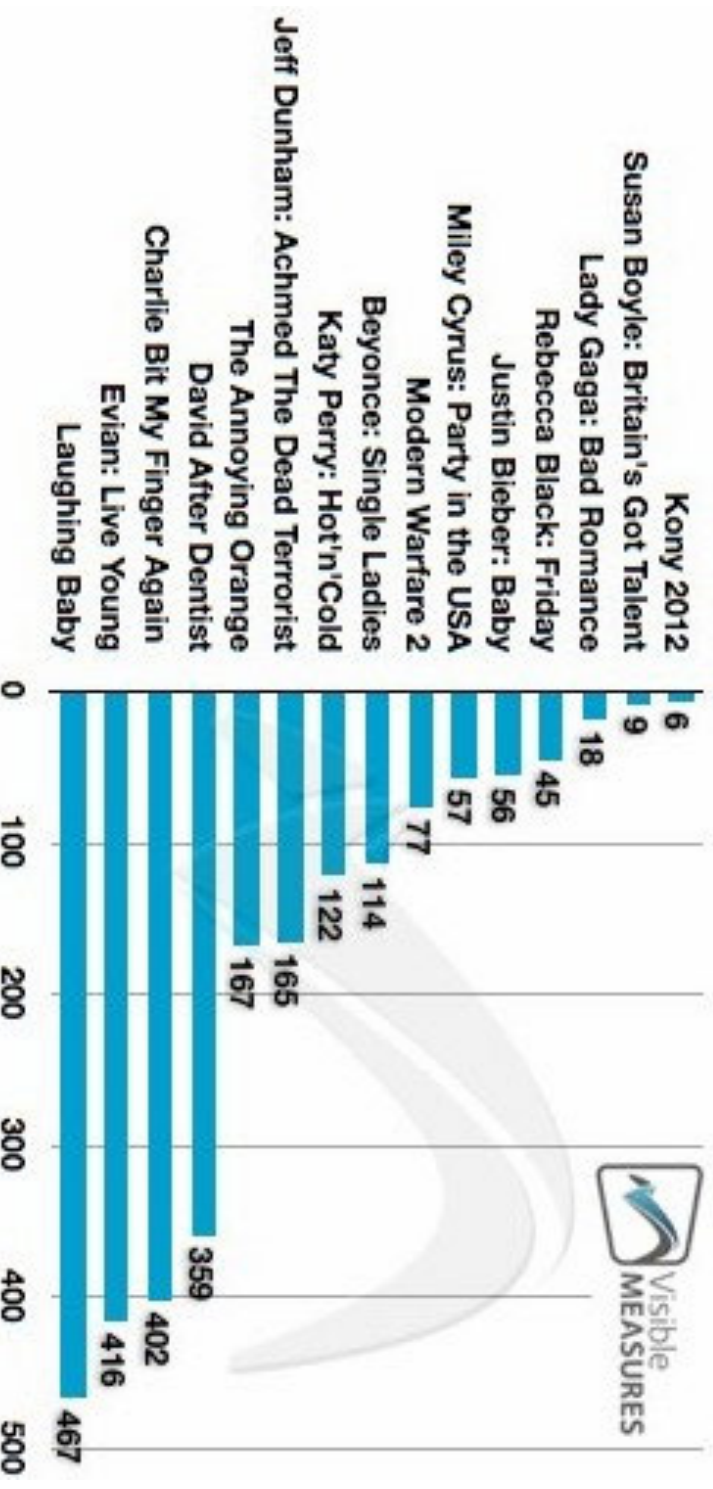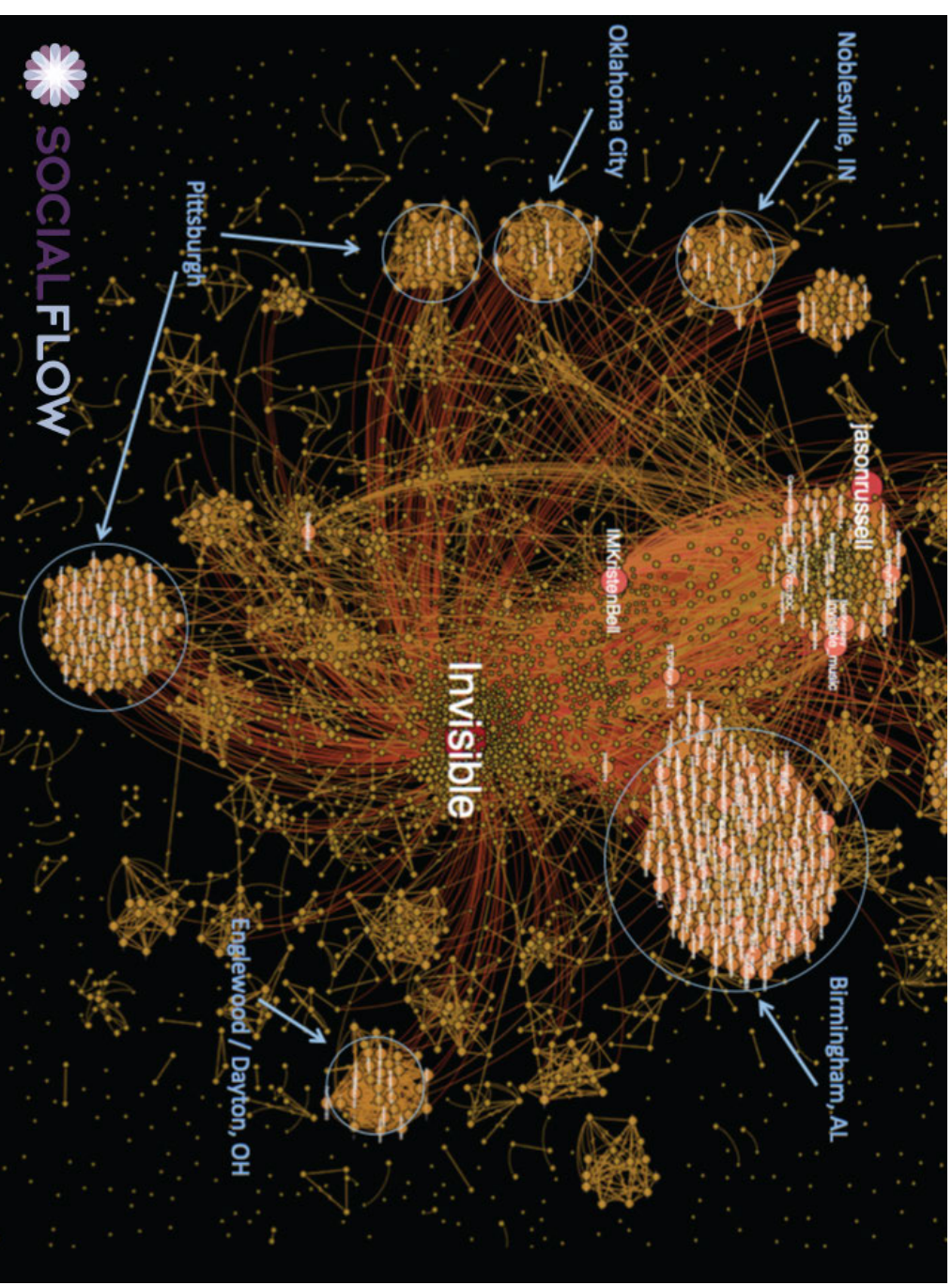
Impacts on Organization

Impacts on Organization

Impacts on participants

1. Education   (Knowledge/Skills)

2. Empowerment   (Beliefs/Values)

3. Engagement   (Vocational/Civic)

Impacts: Educate

Knowledge about the issues

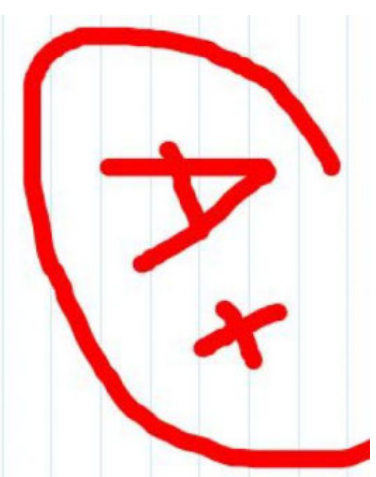Developing Efficacy and Skills

Impacts: Empower

Enhancing personal values

Understanding connections

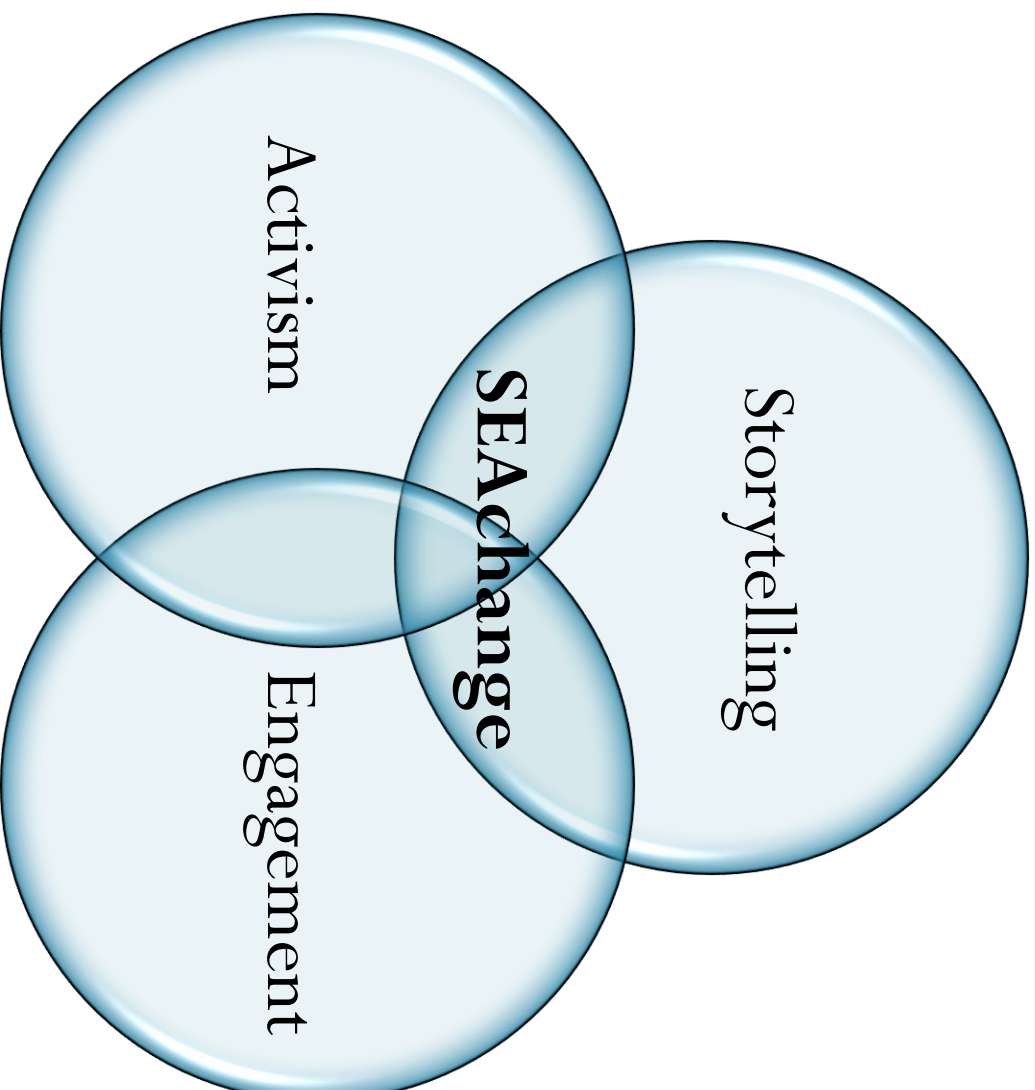# Impacts: Engage

Guiding academic and career choices

Enabling Civic Engagement

Thank you!

Activism

Storytelling

SEAchange

Engagement

Beth Karlin
Email: bkarlin@uci.edu
www.cusa.uci.edu

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Center for
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